

## **Partnerships**

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This policy provides an overall framework for the Patrick Heath Public Library to manage existing and new partnerships. The goal is to ensure the library has strong community partnerships that are focused on advancing library, city and community goals.

### **Reasons for Engaging in Partnership**

The library engages in partnerships to:

1. Extend and enhance library services and programs in a sustainable way
2. Increase awareness of library services and programs
3. Support the City of Boerne and broad-based community initiatives that advance Boerne's economic, social and cultural richness
4. Enhance coordination and reduce overlap in efforts between agencies serving the greater Boerne community

### **Definition**

A partnership is defined as a mutually beneficial collaboration between the library and an external organization(s). Partner contributions provide support for and/or promote activities, services, events and programs to the public in ways that are mutually beneficial.

### **Criteria for Engaging in Partnerships**

The following criteria govern how the library approaches partnerships and related activities. Not all criteria will apply in every case; however, they will be used to inform decision making. Priority will be given to organizations and initiatives that meet multiple criteria from the following list:

1. Aligns with our core organizational values
2. Shares common goals or objectives with the library
3. Is committed to collaborative and shared planning
4. Is committed to ongoing evaluation of progress and continuous improvement

5. Is committed to collective impact and long-term strategies
6. Is committed to looking for mutual benefit and a reciprocal approach to levels of commitment

## **Partnership Levels**

There are three different levels of partnership. Generally, the approach will be to demonstrate success and establish trust on demonstration projects before engaging in long-term major commitments.

The level of oversight and reporting will be proportional to the level of commitment to the partnership.

While some flexibility in working with partners is understood and encouraged, we need to keep in mind that the levels have been developed to encourage mutually beneficial relationships with partners. The stronger the alignment and the greater the partner's commitment will mean greater commitment from the library.

## **Program/Event Partnerships**

Program/event partners provide basic needs, financial, cultural and literacy services that we are proud to support. Other partners offer rewarding opportunities for art, history, cultural enrichment and community-building, provided in the library. Each year we partner with a few select organizations and individuals, to collaborate on special projects or present free programs or services to the public. Due to limited staff time and facility availability, we carefully choose partners that are an optimum fit with our mission and strategic plan.

- Library and Partner Commitments: At least annually a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines the goals and commitments of both parties will be completed. Examples of activities that could be included in an MOU are: shared programs, joint promotion, use of facility. The MOU will cover reporting accountability and a dispute escalation process that includes both parties.

## **Organizational Partnerships**

An organizational partnership aligns with the library and community priorities; however, they also work collaboratively with the library to support library program offerings and/or otherwise contribute to community initiatives in which the library formally participates. These partners may be local groups, organizations or

service clubs. For organizational partners, there is a shared commitment from both parties to shared project planning, evaluation and tracking.

- **Library and Partner Commitments:** At least annually a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that outlines the goals and commitments of both parties will be completed. Examples of activities that could be included in an MOU are: shared programs, joint promotion, collaboration on community initiatives and joint grant applications. Generally, the focus will be on joint in-kind contributions, however, financial support for library programs could also be included. The MOU will cover reporting accountability and a dispute escalation process that includes both parties.
- Existing examples of organizational partnerships include the Boerne Cemetery Foundation, Boys and Girls Club, the Boerne Independent School District (BISD), AARP Tax Aide Foundation, etc.
- **Authorization:** The library director is responsible for signing off on all organizational partnerships.

### **Strategic Partnerships**

A strategic partnership is distinguished by its long-term duration and level of commitment between the library and the partner. Strategic partners involve either a long-term commitment in terms of space, service alignment, program development or financial commitment. Existing examples of strategic partnerships include the Friends of the Boerne Public Library and the Boerne Public Library Foundation. Requirements for strategic partners include:

- **Library and Partner Commitments:** At least annually an MOU that outlines the goals and commitments of both parties will be completed. Examples of activities that could be included in an MOU are shared programs, joint promotion, collaboration on community initiatives, financial commitments and joint grant applications. The MOU will cover reporting accountability and a dispute escalation process that includes both parties.
- **Authorization:** The library director will approve strategic partnerships.

Last review or revision: November 14, 2019

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Addendum: MOU Partner Programs/Events, MOU-Strategic Partners